

Attendance

Members of the Special Advisory Group

Cllr Andrew Johnson (Chair)
Cllr Mary Bateman
Cllr Rita Potter
Cllr John Reynolds
Cllr Sandra Samuels OBE
Cllr Wendy Thompson

Employees

Heather Clark	Service Development Manager
Ian Fegan	Head of Communications
Dereck Francis	Democratic Services Officer
Kevin O'Keefe	Director of Governance
Martyn Sargeant	Head of Democratic Services

Part 1 – items open to the press and public

Item No. *Title*

- 1 Apologies for absence**
Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of Councillors Roger Lawrence, Stephen Simkins and Paul Singh.
- 2 Declarations of interests**
No declarations of interests were made.
- 3 Minutes of the previous meeting - 24 November 2017**
Resolved:
That the minutes of the previous meeting held on 24 November 2017 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.
- 4 Matters arising**
With reference to Minute No. 5 (Polling Stations), Councillor John Reynolds thanked employees for identifying a workable solution to the polling station changes in Graiseley ward. Responding to Councillor Rita Potter's comment that the proposals and distances to new polling stations should not discourage the electorate from voting, Martyn Sargeant, Head of Democratic Services reported that action was being taken to target the north of the Wednesfield ward. Every voter in the ward would be written to offering a postal vote.

5 **Community Governance Review**

With reference to Minute 5 from the meeting held on 8 September 2017, Martyn Sargeant, Head of Democratic Services presented a plan identifying key actions arising from the principal issues identified by the citywide community governance review in 2017. It was formally proposed to bring the review to a close but to follow up on the actions in response to the issues highlighted by residents.

Referring to the Tettenhall community governance review, Councillor Wendy Thompson asked whether funding for the Tettenhall Local Neighbourhood Partnership would continue. She also asked that in terms of the Local Plan that the Neighbourhood Partnership Steering Group be formally recognised for future consultation purposes including on planning applications. Councillor John Reynolds reported on the action the organisation would need to take regarding funding. The Head of Democratic Services undertook to refer the point regarding the Neighbourhood Partnership Group being recognised for the purposes of consultations on planning applications to the Head of Planning.

Ian Fegan, Head of Corporate Communications, Heather Clark, Manager Strategic Project Funding and the Head of Democratic Services elaborated upon the work intended on each of the action plan objectives. The Advisory Group made the following comments and observations:

- Involving Councillors more on where section 106 income is spent would go some way to fostering closer liaison between the Council and local community.
- Where objectives in the action plan propose work with residents, the words 'and businesses' be added to the objective to ensure that, if it is not already taking place, similar engagement with the business community be introduced to obtain their views and facilitate their engagement in decision making and service delivery.
- That the objective 'Consider a scrutiny review or task and finish group on Councillor engagement', be amended to '**Recommend** a scrutiny review.
- A paper be submitted to a future meeting of the Advisory Group on draft rules for managing public questions at Council or other meetings.
- Prior to the submission of a report to Cabinet on the development of an online 'community offer' to improve information and advice for residents, the report and proposals be submitted for pre-decision scrutiny.

Resolved:

That the Council be recommended to:

1. Approve the action plan arising from the community governance review, taking on board the comments of the Special Advisory Group.
2. Formally close the citywide community governance review and deliver the action plan arising from it.